FROM THE ARMY ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE

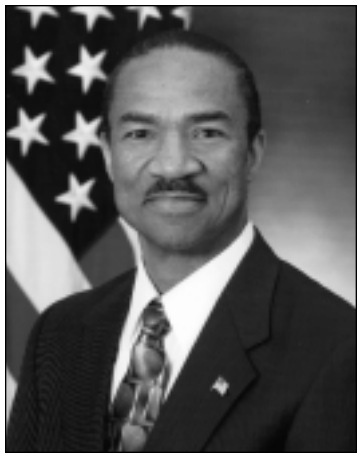
Acquisition, Logistics, And Technology: Facing The Future Together

When my staff and I sat down to plan the 2002 Army Acquisition Workshop, which was held this past August in Norfolk, VA, I noticed that the draft agenda was focused primarily on acquisition. "Where's logistics? Where's technology?" I asked. We then revised the agenda to reflect the total responsibilities of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology. Wimpy D. Pybus, our Deputy for Integrated Logistics Support, was added to describe the importance of logistics in program life-cycle management. Dr. A. Michael Andrews II, our Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology and the Army's Chief Scientist, was also added to describe the issues around technology transition. These changes in program content provided our program executive officers, program/project/product managers, and acquisition commanders with a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges we must overcome in developing, acquiring, and sustaining the Objective Force.

Fielding the Army's initial Objective Force Unit of Action with the Future Combat Systems (FCS) is our highest development priority and our toughest challenge. We are building on the lessons of our success in acquiring Interim Force capabilities. Exploiting innovations in technology requires innovations in acquisition and logistics. Our success during the last 3 years of transformation shows that working as a professional team, we can achieve great things. For example, we *acquired* Stryker in just 18 months. The first Stryker rolled off an assembly line in Anniston, AL, this past April, and by August we were landing them in C-130s at Bicycle Lake in the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA, during Exercise Millennium Challenge. The first Stryker Brigade will achieve full operational capability in summer 2003.

We need the same determination and teamwork to field FCS in this decade. With FCS, the requirements, technology maturation, acquisition strategy, and costing are all being worked simultaneously. We have established a committed partnership among our warfighting customers, the acquisition workforce, and our industry Lead Systems Integrator, the Boeing-SAIC (Science Applications International Corp.) team. Our daunting challenge is to accelerate the Army's transformation while reducing development and production costs, time, and logistics demands for the fielded systems.

Army Chief of Staff GEN Eric K. Shinseki recently reaffirmed that without a transformation in logistics, there will be no transformation in the Army. We must work to aggressively reduce our logistics footprint and replenishment demand. This means that the deployed Objective Force must have dominant war-winning capabilities while deploying fewer platforms and logistics personnel. Many of the traditional combat service support demands must be



designed out of new systems, and some must be provided with reachback capabilities to reduce stockpiles in theater. Logistics transformation will also rely on information technology for velocity management and real-time tracking of supplies and equipment. The Objective Force systems must achieve maintenance efficiencies through increased reliability and commonality across joint formations—in chassis, repair parts, fuel, munitions, and components. The transformation in logistics will change the way the Army transports, maintains, and sustains its people and materiel.

As critical as logistics transformation is to the Objective Force operational success, it is also important to remember that the path to Objective Force capabilities is through science and technology (S&T). As our warfighters say, S&T defines "the realm of the possible." A strong S&T Program provides options for responding to a full range of military challenges. Our S&T investment identifies and matures new technologies to produce the revolutionary capabilities needed by our soldiers now. Today's investments in S&T are also investments that will provide capabilities for future soldiers—those not even born yet. Maintaining the U.S. technological edge has become even more difficult as advanced technologies proliferate in key areas such as sensors, information processing, communications, and precision guidance. Our S&T Program focuses on unique military technologies that cannot be provided from the commercial world. We have the solemn responsibility to ensure that our soldiers are provided with the most capable and sustainable equipment. A vital and focused Army S&T Program ensures that we can provide America's soldiers with technology solutions to be "On Point for the Nation."

There is a great need for the Army in today's world. When people see what's going on in Afghanistan and in other hot spots around the world, they realize that need. Our Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Special Forces are doing a tremendous job. Still, it is clear that to get the last enemy and secure the outcomes, we need "boots on the ground." We need soldiers who are trained to go in and dig out an enemy who does not want to be dug out.

Our soldiers are fighting asymmetric battles by adapting systems and tactics designed to win the Cold War. While today's systems are performing superbly, we need to provide our soldiers with systems that are optimized for 21st century missions. We are at war today, and there is a great sense of urgency to get on with the Army's transformation. The longer we wait, the tougher it is for our soldiers. Fielding Objective Force capabilities in this decade is paramount. Together, let's make it happen—as an Army of one!

Claude M. Bolton Jr.